
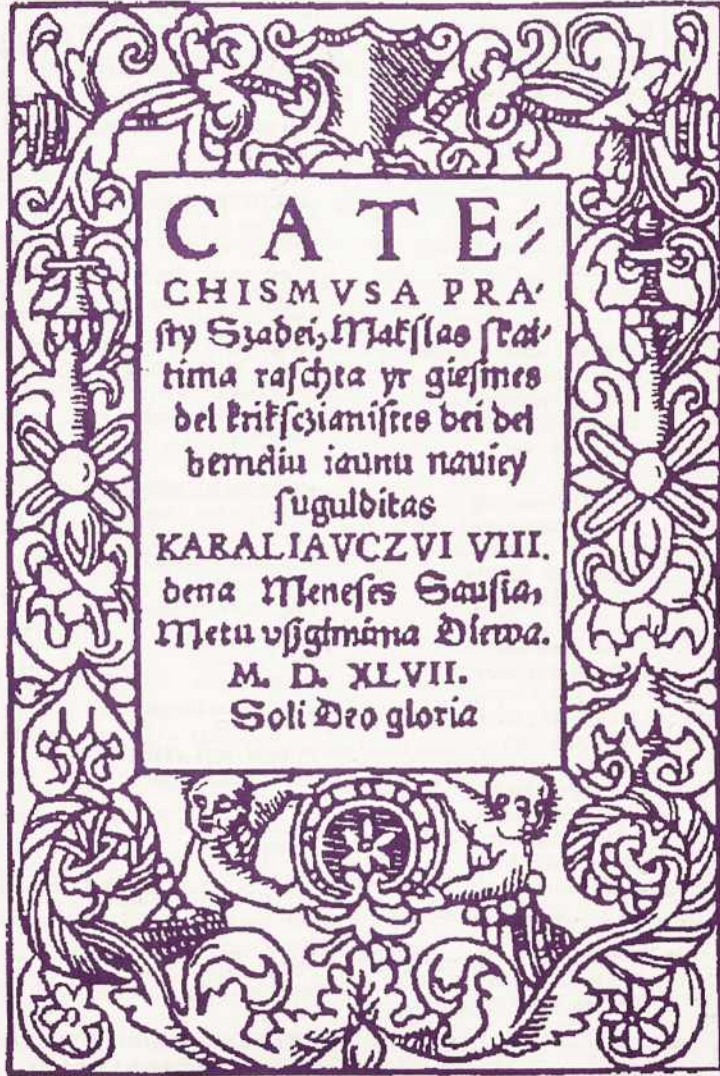


WYDIS

The Knight
volume 83: no. 4



Balandis - April 1997



C A T E
 CHISMVSA PRA'
 sty Szadei, Matšlas stat'
 tima raschea yr giesmes
 del krikščianistes bei del
 bernediu iaunu nauicy
 sugulditas
 KARALIAVCZVI VIII.
 dena Meneses Sausia,
 Metu vsigimāna Dieva.
 M. D. XLVII.
 Soli Deo gloria

VYTIS

-THE KNIGHT -
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Balandis - April 1997
Volume 83: No. 4

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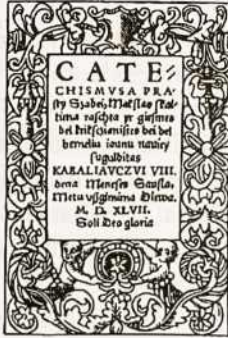
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Cover Art: The title page of the *Catechismus* by Martinus Mažvydas, published in Königsberg in 1547. At present there are only two original copies in existence: one at the University of Vilnius and the other in the Library of Torun University in Poland.

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VYTIS - the Knight - is the official publication of the Knight of Lithuania. The Knights of Lithuania endeavors to instill in its members an attachment to Lithuania, the land of their ancestors, and a knowledge, appreciation and love of the Lithuanian language, customs and culture.

All correspondence should reach the editor by the **first of the month**, two months in advance of the issue and should be typewritten and double spaced. Except for the information contained in the Official News, the Knights of Lithuania and editors assume no responsibility for the statement or opinions made by the contributors or no obligation to return any material or photos unsolicited. Use of material from *VYTIS - The Knight* - is permissible only if credit is given to *VYTIS - The Knight* - its authors, artists or photographers. Lithuanian fonts courtesy of Litnet Typographers.

*Editorial***To My Fellow Knights:**

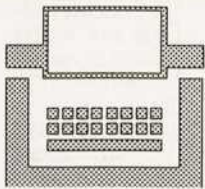
This month marks the 450th anniversary of the publication of Lithuania's first book enabling Lithuanians to enjoy reading in their own language. More recent publications outlined by Len Barcousky in his story on page 6 enable us to understand our heritage in more detail.

Important news from our Scholarship Committee, Foundation Essay Contest and 84th National Convention information are also included in this issue. Don't miss out and please be supportive.

Because of our new status as a "Fraternal Organization", US Postal requirements may not allow us any outside advertising. Although our Lithuanian travel agents usually like to publicize their brochures and tours to Lithuania this time of the year, we regret we cannot include them, but encourage you to phone your area travel agents and ask for the brochures. We will continue to encourage trips to Lithuania by including articles such as this month's one on the Hill of Crosses on pg. 18.

And for the lighter side of our April Fools, don't miss Antonia Wackell's story on page 25.

We hope by this time many of you have already written to Pres. Clinton or Madeleine Albright and told them the US should sponsor NATO membership for Lithuania at this time. As recently as his State of the Union Address, Pres. Clinton reiterated his vision for a unified, peaceful and prosperous Europe to include all the democracies. We should remind him we support his policy and not that of the US Congress which has chosen to artificially divide Central and Eastern Europe by naming only three or four nations for initial NATO entry, and placing Lithuania and the Baltics into a "not ready" class. Remember, the Republic of Lithuania was one of the first to join Partnership for Peace and has seriously and urgently requested acceptance into NATO. She has taken all due measures to qualify for membership including multi-national military and peacekeeping efforts. A NATO ministerial meeting is slated for June, but individual letters are needed to be sent NOW.



*Letters to the
Editor*

K of L. Choir

Dear Editor:

I am pleased that you were able to utilize my brief overview (December '96 issue-VYTIS) of the Chicago District Knights of Lithuania since its inception in 1916.

Additional information is still needed regarding the directors who preceded my tenure, as the director, in 1941. I am searching for and am finding these additional materials that will add to the history of the Chicago District K of L Choir. I am assuming that the period after my tenure as choir director will be

researched by those who have been actively involved with the group since 1960.

I am sorry that I was not able to proofread the article before it was printed because a few errors did occur:

- 1) The Table of Contents states: "K of L Choir 8th Anniversary" should be **80th**.
- 2) On Page 4, bottom left column, P. *Baluds* should be P. Baltutis.
- 3) On page 4, second paragraph from the bottom, on the right, *Račus* should be Račkus!
- 4) The heading above the picture refers to the fact that the printed program was a gift to the "Žilevičius Archive of Lithuanian Musicology". It was stamped by Mr. and Mrs. Pocius (his second wife and not the one pictured in the program below the heading) when he donated his collection before his death in 1953, or, donated by his second wife, at a later date.
- 5) Near the end of the article in the listing

of present choir officers Mary *Kindus* should be Mary Kinčius (a very dedicated and active C-36 member).

Finally - I did make a serious error in re-typing the article. On page 5, second paragraph, line three, 1918/1941 should have been typed 1916-1941. That was my error. The two Lithuanian articles that I prepared, based upon similar material, had the correct date ("Draugas" and "Muzikos Žinios").

Vytiškai,
Leonard J. Simutis

Ed.'s note: Mea culpa to Mr. Simutis and the K. of L. Choir. Having limited staff and time especially at Christmas is still no excuse, and will gladly fax you (or any writer) page proofs in the future if you include a fax number and request.

On a positive note, a copy of the K. of L. Choir (and Dancers) video "A Lithuanian Wedding" was recently gifted to C-90's Becky Nakrosis who had asked me about Lithuanian wedding customs, since I found it quite informative and entertaining. It was purchased at the Brockton convention and I thought it might make a nice shower gift for Lithuanian newlyweds. Hope to see and hear more of the Choir and these productions that promote our heritage in the future.

Lithuanian History Needed in Costa Rica

To the Editor:

I am working on a novel about my Lithuanian family. My parents immigrated separately from Lithuania around 1900 and met in Greenridge, Illinois.

I am especially in need of information about Lithuania from 1850 onward. I know that the country was in a constant

state of flux at that time. There is little in the history books. Aleksander Solzhenitsyn tells briefly of their heroism and stubbornness. But, I am very proud of my ancestry.

Of course, I will mention names in the credits. Thanks.

George H. Prosser Rebecauskus
Apdo 117, Golfito, Costa Rica, SA

Any other history buffs out there?

Lithuanian Stone Cairns

To the Editor:

I read with interest the article "A Dark Journey Into A Painful Past" in the January issue of VYTIS.

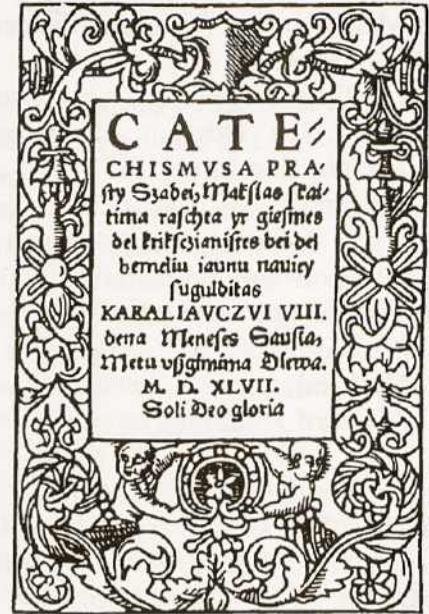
Having visited Lithuania in 1995, on my way to a restaurant, I happened to take a photo of a stone cairn, not realizing the history of it and just knowing it signified Lithuanian martyrs. Am enclosing the picture as perhaps readers of VYTIS might like to see it.

-Victoria Augustine
C-26, Worcester, MA



Lithuania Commemorates Its First Book

The Consulate General of the Republic of Lithuania held a special commemoration event at the main New York Public Library on April 2nd to announce that the Republic of Lithuania has declared, 1997 as the *Year of the First Lithuanian Book*. Four hundred and fifty years ago, the first book published in Lithuanian was the *Catechismus* by Martynas Mažvydas and was printed in Königsberg in 1547. Events to mark the anniversary began this year at the Vilnius University Library where the jubilee exhibition of old Lithuanian books was opened on January 8th. One of the two known remaining copies of the *Catechismus* is kept in this library.



Other commemorations have been planned throughout the year and include research on 16th to 18th century writings, major scientific works and international conferences. The first Lithuanian book is included in an exhibition at the UNESCO offices in Paris and Berlin, as well as a UNESCO calendar and a commemorative postal stamp.

Background of the Time

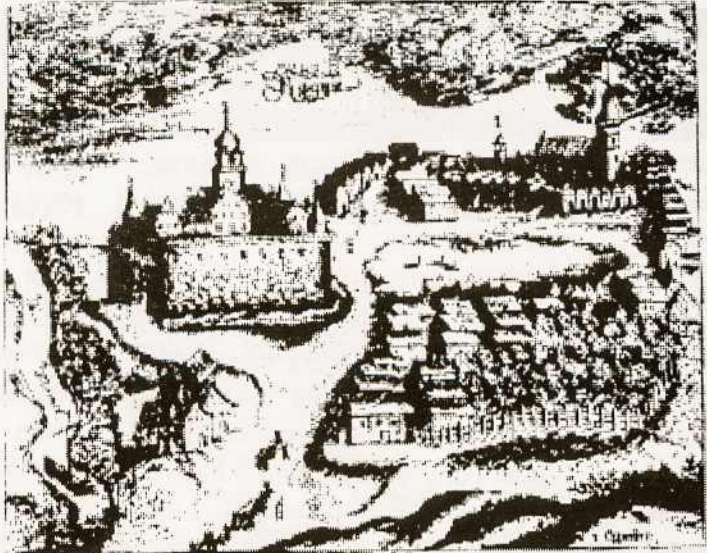
Around the 1520's, the influential neighboring Kingdom of Poland issued edicts prohibiting the circulation of Protestant writings in an effort to curb the Reformation movement and in 1535 these edicts became effective in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The religious struggle during the Protestant Reformation period continued in rather peaceful discussion probably due to the fact that the Lithuanian aristocracy had strong Protestant supporters such as the Radivillas and others. In 1563, the Lithuanian Seimas adopted a declaration of freedom of religion to all faiths without any exceptions. Not only Catholic and Protestant ideas mingled in 16th century Vilnius, but Slavic and Jewish culture thrived in Lithuania's most prominent city as well. Being the printing center of many

religious and ethnic cultures with different languages proclaiming different beliefs, Vilnius became a haven where printers compared their beliefs. The cover plate on a Catholic book by Mikalojus Daukša in 1599, for example, used a Renaissance arch of triumph. The same plate was used for Ivan Fedorov's book, *Apostle*, in Russian and the Protestant *Lithuanian Postil*. Thus, the same form of cover design was used for three different religions.

Life of the Author

The author of this first book, Martynas Mažvydas was born some time around 1520, although no accurate date can be established. In 1546, he received an invitation from the Duke of Prussia to study at the University of Königsburg. Among the first group of seven graduates from the University, he was the only Lithuanian in that group. He was regarded by many to be an honorable and educated man and in 1547 he handed in his *Catechesmus* for publication. It is not clear where he had been educated before arriving at Königsburg, however at that time many Lithuanian gentry usually attended Cracow Academy or universities in Germany or Italy.

Opposite page: Cover of the Catechismus. Right: Ragainė at the beginning of the 17th century. On the right is Mažvydas parish. Engraving from Ch. Hartknoch. Courtesy of Lithuanian Ministry of Culture, and Baltos Lankos ©1996 Vilnius.



Much of the information about Mažvydas' life comes from letters he wrote while living in Prussia. We know he was a poor man who often requested favors from the Duke. We also know he paid the smallest matriculation fee and received a grant from the Duke.

Upon graduating in the Spring of 1549, he was appointed pastor of Ragaine (Protestant) parish after the German pastor who had died left a large family. The parish at that time was completely Lithuanian. It was here he met and married the oldest daughter of the pastor. It is said he had to marry her and take care of her brothers and sisters to the end of his life.

The parish brought hardship to his life. He was unsuccessful in his attempt at farming and was refused an annuity from the state treasury. And because of the upheaval in Christianity during the Reformation, his parishioners were often unruly and troublesome. As he put it, the parishioners "thought little of Christian religion and understood nothing at all about the prayer to God and the canons of faith". Mažvydas recalled, "He had little hope of achieving any definite progress in the parishioners' religious habits....they tried to evade practising religion and church attendance was very poor."

It is not known if Mažvydas ever visited Lithuania proper again, once he accepted the Ragaine parish position, but the dedications in his published books indicate he had Lithuanian readers in mind and his books seemed to circulate throughout Lithuania.

Prior to his death on May 21, 1563, he continued to publish books, nor did he terminate his studies so to be able to continue producing religious books in Lithuania. It was this reason why he was supported by the highest authorities in Prussia and Lithuania.

Significance of the Book

The first Lithuanian book itself was published in a small format (18 x 11 cm or approximately 7 x 4 1/3") and was 79 pages in length and printed in Gothic lettering, except for some titles and text in Latin. The Gothic letters of the Lithuanian text were printed very unevenly and unclearly, which probably accounted for a poor quality print shop. The number of copies printed initially was between 200 to 300, but the book has been reprinted for scholarly purposes. Not only is this first book a catechism, but it includes the first original Lithuanian text written in verse as the foreword, the first Lithuanian primer with the alphabet adapted for the first time to Lithuanian sounds that clearly follow the Latin pattern, and the first collection of Lithuanian hymns.

The book begins with a dedication in Latin to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Its content is composed of the Ten Commandments, prayers, a few excerpts from the Bible, representing the first attempts at translating the Bible into Lithuanian and eleven hymns presented with musical notation.

The foreword of 112 lines of secular verse begins with "Brothers and Sisters, take and read me..." and addresses the importance of Christianity over pagan beliefs. Although it stresses Protestant Reformational thought over Catholicism, it is one of the first attempts to articulate Christian culture in the language of the people, Lithuanian, and bridges the passage from spoken to written language.





READ ALL ABOUT IT: LITHUANIA

*By Len Barcousky
Lithuanian Affairs Chairman*

Ten years ago, if you wanted to read in English about Lithuanian history, your choices in most community libraries were very limited. "Lithuania: 700 Years," edited by Albertis Gerutis, probably was the most commonly found book. It is a one volume, and it has been updated periodically. But it usually looked pretty lonely sitting there on the library shelf. For the most part, historians, journalists and travel writers were silent about Lithuania. On those rare occasions when a reference to the country came up, it was most often as a footnote in a book about Polish or Russian history.

Shortly after I came to work at the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette in 1986, I looked up the file of newspaper clippings on Lithuania in our "morgue," or library. It dated back to the 1950's, and it was pretty thin. Lithuania had been featured over the decades in only a few dozen stories. That was in a newspaper in a city with a sizable Lithuanian-American community that sponsored many social organizations and had several ethnic parishes.

Three years later, the situation changed dramatically. Lithuania's leading role in the break up of the Soviet Union caught the attention of both academic writers and reporters. As a result, many stories with a Lithuanian angle have been covered extensively by the world's press since 1989. They include the formation of Sajudis, the declaration and achievement of independence, the political successes and defeats of Vytautas Landsbergis, the murder of Lithuanian border guards at Medininkai, and the efforts to privatize the economy. Probably the best known tale is the

story of the bloody attack by Soviet Special Forces on the Vilnius TV Tower in January 1991. The refusal of both ordinary people and the Lithuanian government to be cowed by the Moscow-directed violence inspired and amazed the world. It also anticipated what would happen seven months later in Russia itself, when hard-line Communists attempted an unsuccessful coup.

As more and more British and American reporters traveled to the Baltics, Lithuania was featured prominently in more and more books, magazine stories and newspaper articles. Here are titles, authors and short descriptions of a few of the many books published since 1989 in which Lithuania and Lithuanians play major roles.

Ticket to Latvia, by Marcus Tanner (Henry Holt & Co. 1989) This is an odd book by a quirky English writer. It's the story of his railway journey from the former East Berlin to the former Leningrad. Along the way he chats with a cross-section of Germans, Poles, Czechs, Hungarians, Latvians and Lithuanians. This was the period when Eastern and Central Europeans were starting to say things they had kept bottled up for more than 40 years. Near the end of his trip, Tanner was riding in a passenger compartment when a hard-drinking Pole pulled out a large map. "Vilnius is Polish," he announced. "Lvov is also Polish." Those assertions are challenged immediately by a second traveler..... then they began to fire historical dates at each other. Each one was well armed with relevant dates that proved Polish, Russian or Lithuanian ownership of the disputed cities..." Tanner's book gave an early warning of some of the ethnic and border conflicts that would follow the break-up of the Soviet empire and the Eastern bloc.

IS BACK IN THE LIBRARIES

Lithuania Awakening, by Alfred Erich Senn. (University of California Press, 1990) Alfred Erich Senn, a professor of history at the University of Wisconsin, is someone who learned about Lithuania in his cradle. His father, Alfred Senn, was an Alsatian who became a world renowned expert on Lithuanian language and folklore. Alfred Erich Senn himself has been reading, thinking, writing and teaching about Russia and the Baltic states for decades. He was on top of the story when Lithuania's improbable struggle for independence began. He was on the scene in Vilnius in 1988, a time when the whole world wasn't watching. As a result, he can write about those critical months relying both on his research and his first-hand experience.

The Baltic Revolution, by Anatol Lieven (Yale University Press, 1993) The dust jacket of this book shows an often published photo of the dismantling in 1991 of the giant Lenin Monument in Vilnius. That was one of the great days in Lithuania's struggle for independence. Lieven's book is the single best history I've read of how and why the Baltic states regained their independence. He follows the very different stories of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, placing them into historical context. He is terrific at summing up centuries of complex events in a few pages. Lieven himself has roots in the region. His father's family were Baltic Germans who lived for centuries in Latvia.

Between East and West, by Ann Applebaum. (Pantheon Books, 1994) Traveling from the Baltic to the Black Sea, Applebaum visited the lands that have suffered greatly

because of their location separating Russia, Germany and Poland. Alternating between well written, brief essays and anecdotes based on personal experience, she captures the complex history of these borderlands. Much of this territory has strong links to the medieval Lithuanian empire or the later Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth. In one fascinating chapter, she reviews the bittersweet history of Perloja, a small town on the Merkys River that was briefly an independent state after World War I.

She has personal interest in this area. Some of Applebaum's Jewish ancestors came from this area, and she herself is married to a Polish politician.

Down with Big Brother, by Michael Dobbs (Alfred A. Knopf, 1996) In this new book by a veteran reporter with the Washington Post, there are 14 references to Lithuania and Lithuanian events. Among the high points of the volume is a

gripping chapter devoted to the events of Jan. 13, 1991. It's a story that many of us know well. When "Alpha Group" special forces took control of the Vilnius TV tower that night, the Soviets showed that they were willing to drive tanks over the bodies of unarmed civilians. Their leaders in Moscow believed that American and European attention was focused on looming war with Iraq, and that they would have free reign to reimpose control over Lithuania. The attack, however, produced an angry outcry in the West. More importantly, Lithuanians refused to be intimidated. Thousands, most of them unarmed, responded to a call to defend the Parliament building. Thousands more lined the streets of Vilnius and filled Cathedral Square for the funerals of those



killed in the attacks. Dobbs captures the terror, the danger, the confusion and the courage of those critical days.

Europe: A History, by Norman Davies (Oxford University Press, 1996) Norman Davies is one of the world's great authorities on Polish history. Unlike many experts, he does not wear blinders that permit him to ignore anything happening outside his field of expertise. In his magisterial, idiosyncratic and very readable history of Europe, he does not slight Poland's longtime partner, rival and neighbor, Lithuania. His 1,136-page book includes a map of "Lithuania, Medieval and Modern" and has multiple references to Lithuanian language, culture and history. It is very satisfying to find Lithuania's story so well integrated into a general history of Europe.

Resurrection: The Struggle for a New Russia, by David Remnick. (Random House,

1997) David Remnick won a Pulitzer Prize for "Lenin's Tomb," his 1993 story of the fall of the Soviet Union. Lithuania's battle for freedom was an important part of that book. Here is some good news. In "Resurrection," a book about contemporary Russia, Lithuania isn't even in the index. I take heart in this for two reasons. First, the whole book demonstrates that non-Soviet Russia has plenty of problems of its own. Second, the absence of any mention of Lithuania suggests just how absolute the break between Russia and the Baltic states has been.

Lithuania's history is a complicated one and many issues remain controversial. You won't by any means like everything you read in any of these books. But it's great to see that Lithuania is not being ignored.

Happy reading.



Lithuanian Independence Proclamations



Lithuanian Independence Day this past February 16th was commemorated in many cities and states across the country. Some councils celebrated with a special Mass and program as you'll read in the Council News section.

A few sent in press clippings from various newspapers, such as C-74's photo and caption from the *Scranton Sunday Times* featuring council president Marie Lasky, city council president John Pocius, mayor Jim Connors, St. Joseph's Parish Msgr. Peter Nadus and Rev. Ken Strawhand of the Province of God Lithuanian National Catholic Church.

An editorial from *Amsterdam Recorder* entitled "Freedom Bells Ring for Tiny Lithuania" gave C-100 Knights accolades for hard work and donations to hospitals. The editor noted "The struggle for freedom isn't

over; it never ends. People long for freedom; they fight and die for it. Americans know that, and so do Lithuanians." The city's Mayor, John A. Duchessi, Jr. also issued a proclamation.

New Jersey's Governor, Christine Todd Whitman, proclaimed Feb. 16 as Republic of Lithuania Day in New Jersey and commended the outstanding contributions bestowed upon the Garden State by the 41,000 Americans of Lithuanian descent living in New Jersey.

Thanks to Marie Lasky, C-74; Gene Gobis and Adeline Raila of C-100; and new member, Mark Bablin of C-29, Newark NJ for these submissions. Next year, more councils are invited to send in copies of Lithuanian Independence Proclamations, press clippings and photos (originals only) of this most important day that we'll consider for publication in VYTIS. ◆◆◆

Local Lithuanian Saints

BARBORA ŽAGARĖTĖ

(Barbara of Žagarė)

Part III, conclusion**The Legacy of Barbora Žagarėtė.**

by Vincent B. Boris

It is estimated that over 400 miracles have been attributed to the intercession of Barbara of Žagarė. Only a few of these have been documented; the vast majority are verbal stories passed from generation to generation. On a few occasions the local pastor tried to keep records and take testimony, but most of these records have been lost through fire, destruction by invading armies or confiscation by occupying forces. One of these old ledgers has, nevertheless, survived. It presents testimonials of miracles occurring during the period 1833 to 1857. It was compiled by the pastor at Žagarė. Again, it must be borne in mind that these are testimonials given to the pastor and local witnesses by the beneficiary of the miracle. The validity of the miracle therefore rests totally on the credibility of the person relating the story. The witnesses could only attest to the accuracy with which the story was recorded.

1) **Ona Masciskienė.** On May 2, 1853, this woman, the wife of Liudvikas Mesciskas from the village of Maldininkai, parish of Tryškiai, came to Žagarė to fulfill a vow she had made. A year earlier, she had promised to make a pilgrimage to Žagarė if Blessed Barbara would effect a cure of her illness.

Local doctors had been unable to help. The woman claimed to have been cured immediately. After praying at Barbara's crypt, she came to the rectory and told her story in the presence of her husband, the Bajoras Juozas Viršila and Antanas Sinkevičius.

2) **Emilija Eigvilaitė.** On April 16, 1851, Emilija Eigvilaitė from Eigeliškiai village in the Salantai region, reported in the presence of her mother and the above-named witnesses that she had suffered from pain in the eyes and deceased vision for months. She too had prayed for Barbara's intercession and vowed to make a pilgrimage to Žagarė. Immediately, the pain vanished and her good eyesight returned.

"...as they were entering the yard of their home, the young man felt a sharp chill and then a tremendous surge of energy. He stretched his paralyzed legs then climbed down from the cart without any assistance. He was cured."

3) **Agota Gvidgaikienė.**

On May 15, 1854, Agota travelled from her home in Zemaičiu Kalvarija to Žagarė to fulfill her vow to Barbara. After doctors had been unable to cure a mysterious disease which caused a painful red rash on the face, she invoked the aid of Barbara. The pain disappeared and the rash cleared up immediately.

4) **Barbora Paltabaite.**

This young woman from Vaiguva had a paralyzed leg. After invoking the intercession

of Barbora of Žagarė, she regained use of her leg. On April 26, 1856, she came to Žagarė to fulfill her vow to Barbora and gave witness to her healing.

5) **Petronelė Čekauskaitė.** On July 27, 1859, this woman from Barnenai, testified that she had been blind for seven years. She prayed to Barbora vowing to make a pilgrimage. She, soon, regained her eyesight sufficiently to make the trip to Žagarė by herself.

In a more recent document additional stories about miraculous hearings are reported:

1) During the period of independence, in

1938, an unknown woman came to the house of Ona and Jurgis Vasiliauskas in Bruzdžiai, in the village of Mykolaičiai. She asked for a place to stay overnight. She was extremely tired as she was travelling by foot from Kaunas to Žagarė to see Barbora's remains and to offer a gift of a silk dress in thanksgiving for her son's restored health. Her son, a priest, had contracted tuberculosis and had been in the terminal stages when even the doctor said there was no more that could be done. Having heard about Barbora from a friend, she and her son prayed for nine days that he might recover. At the end of the novena, he indeed was cured and all signs of his previous illness disappeared.

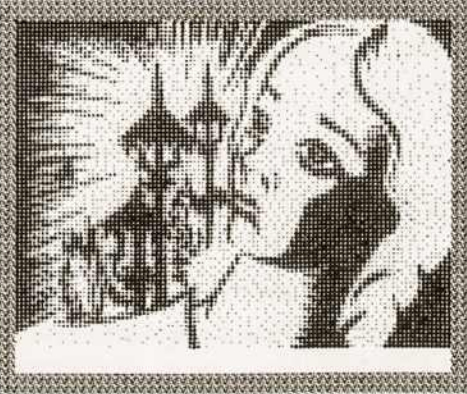
2) One day in 1955 while the Rev. Povilaitis was the pastor of the parish, a strange woman and two men came to the rectory and asked Fr. Povilaitis to open the cellar of the church where Barbora's body was kept. He did as she asked, and as soon as the woman came down into the crypt she fell on her knees and ardently prayed with tears in her eyes, "Saint Barbara, you restored my health. Now I came to thank you." The two men that had accompanied her to the rectory turned out to be her brothers, but they did not come into the church or the crypt. They were high ranking government officials and professed not to believe in God.

The woman came from a village not too far from Vilnius and had suffered from cancer for years. She had reached the terminal stage; her body was covered with open sores. The doctor indicated that she had at most two weeks to live. She had her brothers summoned from Vilnius so that they would be with her in her final days. A friend, however, gave her a fragment of a dress that had been worn by Barbora Žagaretė. She suggested that the woman say a novena to Barbora during these last two weeks. As she said the novena, the

woman's health began to improve. When the novena was completed, she was able to get up and walk on her own. When the brothers arrived in accordance with her dying wish, they were surprised to find her healthy albeit still a bit weak. She begged them to drive her to Žagarė so that she could personally thank Barbora.

Fr. Povilaitis had been so impressed by the story that he would often use it in his sermons. Of course, this got him into trouble with the Soviet authorities who ordered him to stop telling such stories. This incident may well have hastened the decision to close the church and effectively suppress the cult of Barbora.

3) In more recent times, a young man, only 24 years old, was brought to Žagarė by his brother. He had a bone disease and both legs were paralyzed. Having been told about Barbora of Žagarė by a neighbor, he determined to travel to Žagarė to seek a cure. His home was in Pumpėnai parish in the Pasvalys region. Their only available means of transportation was by horsedrawn cart. It took



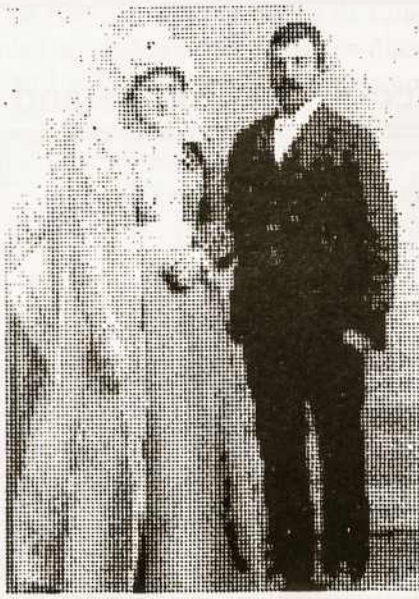
three days to get to Žagarė where they stayed with a young couple. The day after arriving, the whole group went to the old church to ask for a miracle. Since the church was closed, they prayed in front of the church door for a long time. There was no change in the man's condition and after a while he and his brother left to return to their home convinced that it was God's will that he remained paralyzed. Three days later as they were entering the yard of their home, the young man felt a sharp chill and then a tremendous surge of energy. He stretched his paralyzed legs then climbed down from the cart without any assistance. He was cured. One year later he made another pilgrimage to Žagarė in thanksgiving.

Epilogue

While certainly not so dramatic as these miraculous cures, the solace and blessed assurance, that my grandmother, Barbara Leveikaitė had derived from her devotion to Barbora Žagaretė, represented to her a kind of miracle that affected and effected her whole life. Barbara Leveikaite safely completed her journey to America. She met and married her intended husband and enjoyed a long prosperous life. She never forgot her special patron and relished the opportunities to reminisce and relate the story of her relationship with Barbora Zagaete to her grandchildren.

In 1990, my brother and I, finally had an opportunity to travel to Lithuania and visit various ancestral homesites like Žagarė. We had grown up with Grandmother's tales of the homeland and especially of "Saint" Barbara and had come to share her great affection and devotion. Thus it was some one hundred years after she had left Lithuania, that her descendants with great anticipation went to pay respect to this beloved "saint". We found the little church - but not Barbara. The Church had been closed as a place of worship decades earlier and converted to other uses. Fifty years of Soviet neglect, despite their having used it as a warehouse, had left the church building in bad disrepair. We were able to confirm, from elderly local workmen that this, indeed, was the church where the body of "Saint Barbara" had been kept. Reportedly, the Soviets had removed the body in the early Sixties, sealed off the crypt and closed the church.

In 1994, the building was returned to the Church. Many repairs had to be made before



*Barbara Leveikaitė and
Dominikas Ramonas on their
wedding day.*

resumption of its religious purpose. Unfortunately, the fate of "Saint" Barbara's remains is an unsolved mystery. There is a rumor that the uncorrupted remains of Barbara and two others were transported to a Scientific Research Institute in Leningrad. Perhaps the scientists wished to determine if there were a chemical or physical basis for the marvellous state of preservation that could be employed to preserve their own Soviet heroes. Whatever her fate, we remember the blessings she brought to those who believed, we can only pray for her peaceful repose.

Earlier this year, a relative (a great grand niece of Barbara Leveikaite, by marriage) who is a resident of Žagarė, wrote that she now frequently attends services and visits "Saint Barbara's" church since it was reopened. There is still much repair and renovation work to be done yet, but she much prefers attending services there, rather than the newer church in Žagarė, itself. Invariably, she develops a strong sense of well-being and serenity just by visiting the church. Since these are the same feelings experienced by Grandmother Barbara some hundred years ago, perhaps the spirit of Barbara continues to abide in the place to give succor to believers.

The story of Barbora Zagaretė is based primarily on an anonymous monograph published circa 1986 in Kaunas. It was translated by Dr. Virginia Vaitekoniš-Obando.



Did You Know? The town of Žagarė, near the Latvian border, is known for its famous Hanover horses and stud farms and has the biggest rock wind mill (18th century) in all of Lithuania.

OFFICIAL NEWS

Scholarship Committee Seeks Donors and Scholars

The Supreme Council Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce that awards will again be made to assist those Knights of Lithuania members seeking to further enhance their education at the undergraduate / graduate level of college. The 39th Annual Scholarship Awards will be announced at the 84th National Convention in Dayton, Ohio in August, 1997. Each council and district is requested to assist in this worthy and long-standing commitment in two ways.

First, each council and district is respectfully requested to assist in fund-raising for this project. The scholarship awards are made possible through the continuing generosity of all members at the District and Council levels and individual members. The annual appeal runs from now through June. Please consider donating the same amount or higher to ensure the success of this year's annual appeal. We would like to increase the amount given to the recipients to reflect the ever-increasing amounts of college tuition expenses. All donations will be acknowledged by individual thank-you cards and publication in the Vytis magazine. Individual donations are tax deductible. Please forward your donations to me or the Treasurer, John Baltrus directly. (See addresses on front inside cover.)

Second, please urge qualified candidates in your council/district to apply before the deadline date of June 30, 1997. Scholarship applications are available now from me. Qualified applicants can contact me directly by writing for an applications packet. As in the past, awards are based primarily on Knights of Lithuania involvement, but also take into consideration scholastic achievement, financial need, community service, and character references. Applications must be complete in all details to be considered by the Scholarship

Committee who will be deciding on the recipients in July before the convention. Due to the large number of requests from non-members, please be certain that applicants indicate that they have been members of the Knights of Lithuania for at least two years when writing.

The need for the Knights of Lithuania Scholarship Program continues to be great. Please assist in every way possible with your donation. The members of the Scholarship Committee sincerely thank you for your support and cooperation.

Vytiškai,
*Irena Gecas, Chairperson Scholarship
 Committee*
John Baltrus, Treasurer



SCHOLARSHIP ANNOUNCEMENT

The Knights of Lithuania Scholarship Program is intended to help a worthy and deserving Knight obtain a college education. Applicants must be a member of the organization for at least two years to be eligible to apply for a scholarship award. The Scholarship Program is intended to be a stimulus for young Lithuanian-Americans to join and be active in our organization. Service to the Knights of Lithuania organization is of prime importance to be considered for this award.

Scholarships are awarded annually as a grant. Applications must be complete (i.e., picture, transcripts, recommendations, etc.) to be considered by the Scholarship Committee. Applications must be submitted usually no later than June 30th of each year. The awards are paid to the recipient in two installments. In

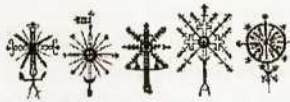
exceptional cases, the award may be made in one lump sum. Scholarships are awarded to different Knights each year and a second award will not be made to the same individual. There are various scholarships available with individual amounts decided upon by the Supreme Council each year.

Each applicant has the responsibility of completing the application and securing entrance to the college of his/her choice. If the recipient of an award drops out of college, or if his/her scholastic standing becomes unsatisfactory to the college, the unexpended balance of the award may be forfeited at the discretion of the Scholarship Committee.

Scholarship awards may be made to a person for undergraduate or graduate work. There is no age limitation. Organizational activity within the

Knights of Lithuania is one of the most important criteria for obtaining a scholarship along with the following requirements and stipulations.

An applicant's qualifications will be based on recommendations made by his/her 1) Council President or Council 3rd Vice President; 2) Spiritual Advisor or Pastor; 3) Former Teacher; 4) Character Reference. Applicants will be evaluated on scholastic records, financial need, results of a personal interview (when possible) and other examinations, if necessary. The applications will be carefully studied by the Scholarship Committee and decisions of the committee are final. The recipients of the Scholarship Awards will be announced at the annual National Convention of the Knights of Lithuania. ❖❖❖



In Memoriam

Walter Grimala

C-26, Worcester, MA

Jan. 12, 1997

Benny G. Ambrose

C-26, Worcester, MA

Feb. 19, 1997

Peter J. Gumbulevich

C-135, Ansonia, CT

Feb. 1, 1997

John Rigely

C-141, Bridgeport, CT

Jan. 17, 1997

Mary Bulger

C-74, Scranton, PA

Feb. 4, 1997

Charlotte Sukurs

C-36, Chicago, IL

Feb. 1997

Rest in Peace.

A Voice is Stilled

by *Albert Cizauskas*

The Lithuanian American community of Washington mourns the loss of Joseph Simanis, one of its most active and beloved members. He died of cancer on Nov. 17, leaving behind his wife, Jane, and two adult children. Apart from family and a career in the U.S. government, Joe's busy life was centered upon his church and the welfare of the Lithuanian people.

Joe was a K. of L. member, served on the national boards of the United Lithuanian American Relief Fund and the Lithuanian Catholic Federation. He coordinated Lithuanian Independence Day services at St. Matthew's Cathedral in Washington for which he wrote the Lithuanian portions of the sermons.

A particularly meaningful contribution was acting as one of the founders and organizers of the Lithuanian Catholic Mission in Washington which has been serving for many years as a religious and social center under Joe's personal stewardship.

Simanis' career in the US government entailed working in the

Federal Reserve Bank, then as economic and consular officer for the State Dept. in Germany, Poland and Curacao and finally as a research analyst with the Social Security Administration.



Joseph Simanis

The above listing of Joe's many activities did not exhaust his energy as he found time to compose lyric poetry of exceptional beauty which his wife, a watercolor artist transcribed in graceful calligraphy each year at Christmas and sent as an annual gift to those he loved.

Joe also wrote a prayer to Blessed George Matulaitis when it became evident that little medical hope remained for his recovery.

"Blessed George Matulaitis pray for us, so that through your intercession, and by your example, we may be blessed with the healing of our illnesses, Spiritual and Physical."

With grateful appreciation, we join in prayers and love with the Simanis family for Joe who has done so much for so many.

KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA FOUNDATION, INC. 1997 ESSAY CONTEST

For years, our members have honored St. Casimir, our patron saint. We have heard talks about his life and works, but have we ever thought about how his life serves as an example to us, what about him makes him a true role model for us? The Knights of Lithuania Foundation, Inc. invites all K. of L. members to research his life and ponder this question. The process and your ideas might even earn you some prize money.

The topic of this year's Foundation Contest is:

"What in the life of St. Casimir makes him an appropriate Patron Saint for the Knights of Lithuania?"

Enter the Contest and share your thoughts. Rules are listed below.

- LENGTH:** 450 to 500 words (count all words).
- DEADLINE:** July 1, 1997. Essays received after this date will not be considered.
- ELIGIBILITY:** A contestant must be a Knights of Lithuania member (Honorary, Regular or Associate) in GOOD STANDING, OR a member of a Junior Council which is duly registered with the Supreme Council.
- CRITERIA:** Essays will be judged on content, originality, and ATTENTION TO CONTEST TOPIC. Correct grammar and neatness will also be considered in judging.
- MANUSCRIPT:** Must be typed or written legibly, double spaced. The FIRST PAGE should contain ONLY your name, address, council number, and the essay title. Succeeding pages should contain the essay contents but NOT your name. This is to assure anonymity in judging.
- PRIZES:** 1st Prize - \$300, 2nd Prize - \$200, 3rd Prize - \$100.
- JUDGES:** Adolf Klova (AMD), Clemencine Miller (NED), Evelyn Ozelis (MAMD), Aldona Ryan (MCD), Loretta Stukas (MAD), Becky Nakrosis (1996 Contest Winner)
- MAIL TO:** Mrs. Aldona Ryan, 6591 McEwen Rd., Centerville, OH 45459
- WINNERS:** Will be announced August, 1997, during the 84th National Convention in Dayton, OH. Winning entries will be published in VYTIS.
- SPONSOR:** KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA FOUNDATION, INC., via a grant from Msgr. Juozas Prunskis.

The **KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA FOUNDATION, INC.** is a tax-exempt endowment fund which uses interest from its investments to finance cultural and religious projects, helping the K of L and Lithuania. This contest is just one of its projects.

The Foundation has been in existence for 13 years. You can help keep it in existence by joining the Foundation to increase its capital and provide more funds to help Lithuania and Lithuanian

projects. A donation of \$100 entitles you to membership in the Foundation, and supports the Knights' future. Are YOU a member of the Foundation? If not, why not join today? If you are a member, consider making an additional donation.

Send your tax-deductible donation to:
Mr. Peter P. Zansitis, Treasurer
5939 S. Crandon Ave.
Chicago, IL 60649

Knights of Lithuania
 84th NATIONAL CONVENTION
 AUGUST 7-10, 1997

Convention Site: Holiday Inn and Homewood Suites
I-675 Conference Center
Fairborn/Dayton, Ohio
Host: Council 96



REGISTRATION AND RATE INFORMATION

CONVENTION REGISTRATION RATE:

Early Registration (deadline June 1, 1997)	\$115.00
Late Registration (after June 1, 1997)	\$120.00
Junior Registration	\$ 60.00
Pre-Convention Tour/Dinner	\$ 40.00

CONVENTION REGISTRATION INCLUDES:

Charter bus services to Opening and Closing Masses, Get-together at Lithuanian Club, Cultural Night at the Air Force Museum Auditorium, Friday and Saturday morning coffee/donuts, Lunch Friday, Convention Banquet, and Sunday Brunch.

HOTEL:

HOLIDAY INN CONFERENCE CENTER: 2800 Presidential Drive, Fairborn, Ohio, 45324 (937) 426-1928

Special K of L rates:

Standard Double - \$69.00 per night (2 double beds)

King Leisure - \$69.00 per night (1 king bed with sofa single sleeper)

HOMEWOOD SUITES: 2750 Presidential Drive, Fairborn, Ohio 45324, (937) 429-9268

Special K of L rates:

One bedroom - \$79.00 per night (king bed with sofa double sleeper)

Guest Suite - \$89.00 per night (one bedroom two double beds with sofa double sleeper)

Master Suite - \$89.00 per night (one bedroom king bed with sofa double sleeper and fireplace)

****Applicable 12% tax to be added to above prices****

Hotel will honor special K of L rates until JULY 1, 1997

PRE-CONVENTION ACTIVITY:

Dayton Highlights Tour/Dinner at the Amber Rose European Restaurant

Wednesday, August 6, 1997 - 12:00 noon to 8:00 p.m.

Transportation included

Maps will be provided from hotels to Amber Rose Restaurant, Lithuanian Club, Air Force Museum, and Holy Cross Lithuanian Roman Catholic Church.

Knights of Lithuania
 84th NATIONAL CONVENTION
 AUGUST 7-10, 1997

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CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____ Council No. _____
 (Please Print)

Street: _____ Phone No. _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Name or Nickname as you prefer it to be shown on your badge: _____

Approximate Arrival (Date/Time) _____ Plane or Automobile

Approximate Departure (Date/Time) _____

I will attend as: (circle one) Delegate Alternate Guest Junior Clergy Honorary Member

I will participate in the Pre-Convention activity \$40.00 (circle one) Yes No

Enclosed check in the amount of \$ _____

(Payable to Knights of Lithuania Council 96)

Mail to:

Lauretta Pant, Registration Coordinator
3247 Ravenwood Drive
Fairborn, Ohio 45324-2227
(937) 878-8589

Early Registration: \$115.00

After June 1, 1997: \$120.00

Juniors Registration: \$ 60.00

Be sure to make your hotel reservations under the Knights of Lithuania before
July 1, 1997 to qualify for the special rates.

Knights of Lithuania
 84th NATIONAL CONVENTION
 AUGUST 7-10, 1997

Convention Site: Holiday Inn and Homewood Suites
I-675 Conference Center
Fairborn/Dayton, Ohio
Host: Council 96



Dear Member,

The Knights of Lithuania 84th National Convention will be held August 7-10, 1997, in Dayton, Ohio... the Heartland of America. Greet your fellow Knights with an ad in the Convention Program Book.

Ad sizes and costs are as follows:

_____ \$100.00 Full Page
 4" x 7"

_____ \$ 50.00 Half Page
 4" x 3 1/2"

_____ \$ 25.00 Quarter Page
 4" x 1 3/4"

_____ \$ 5.00 Patron Greeting

You may use the space provided or, you may submit your ad on a separate piece of paper. Camera ready copy is welcome.

DEADLINE: JUNE 2, 1997
PATRON GREETING

Name _____

Council _____

City, State _____

MAIL ADS WITH PAYMENT TO:
 Knights of Lithuania Program Book
 c/o Judith A. Petrokas, Chairman
 422 Alaska St.
 Dayton OH 45404

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:
 Knights of Lithuania, Council 96



Travelogue

The Sorrow and Hope of Kryžių Kalnas - The Hill of Crosses

As many are looking forward to a visit to Lithuania, a must-see on your first or next trip is a visit to the noted Hill of Crosses, otherwise known as the Hill of Sorrow and Hope. When you bring your largest "cross" there, be it the mourning loss of a loved one, ill health or a something else, it somehow seems minimized when placed with the thousands and thousands of crosses, rosaries and other artifacts within its midst. According to the legend told to a group of us on the Aid to Lithuania tour last summer, when one makes their first pilgrimage to this sacred site to deposit one's "cross" in life, a return trip is necessary to give thanksgiving after one's prayers are answered.

The scenery from the highway located near the site is much the same as any farmland in Lithuania, mainly flatlands and forests with a few gently rolling hills. Then, as one approaches more closely, one can see the elevated hill approximately thirty or so feet higher than the surrounding land with an oval ground on the top clustered with crosses. No wonder our Holy Father chose this site to say Mass on his trip to the newly independent Lithuania in 1993. It is indeed an emotionally moving experience to walk the narrow earthen pathways and view so many different kinds of crosses, rosaries, photographs and personal memorabilia. Some call it the largest exhibit of spiritual folk art, others a meditative and prayerful experience.

Near the Hill is a special wooden open air chapel, erected in 1993 for the Holy Father's visit. During last summer's trip, Fr. Walter Stanievich of Detroit had the honor of celebrating mass there. Local Lithuanians joined the small group of us at

the service who were not used to the Americans' personal greetings or lay people helping Father Stan distribute communion.

Located near a town called Meškuičiai, on the bank of the Kulpė River, the site was first mentioned following the rebellions of the 1800's when people from near and far placed crosses on it in memory of their deceased loved ones. Unknown to most tourists, the locals consider the waters of the Kulpė to have healing powers. Naturally, some of us almost fell in while gathering some of this precious liquid following a meditative walk around the Hill.

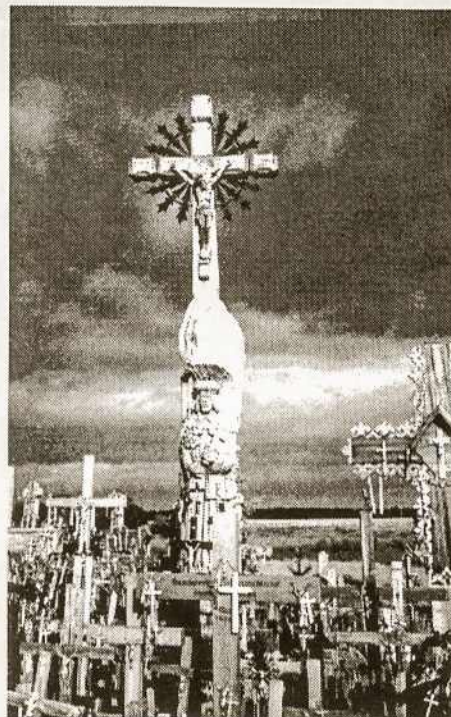
The Hill is also known as the mound of Domantai or Jurgaitiai, the Castle, the Castle hill, or the Hill of Prayers. At one time there may have existed a castle at the site, mentioned in the Livonian Chronicles of the 14th century and called Kula, or Kulan (the name derived from the river Kulpė). The Hill of Crosses is a many sided and very significant phenomenon. First of all it is a historical monument, one of 600 Lithuanian mounds. But the abundance of artistic crosses and religious attributes make it not only a religious site, but also one of interesting folk art.

During the Soviet period, the Hill of Crosses became intolerable to the authorities, it was even earmarked as a forbidden place and those who traveled there were marked by "ignorant fanatics". But the number of crosses kept on growing and the inscriptions on them were considered hostile and antisoviet by local administration.

In 1941-1952 when many Lithuanians were exiled to Siberia, a number of villages were deserted. In 1956 people were allowed to return to



*Opposite page: Pope John Paul II visits the Hill of Crosses in 1993 (photo courtesy of Anne Wargo).
Top: Fr. Walter Stanievich celebrates Mass at the site in 1996 on Aid to Lithuania tour; Right: The Knights of Lithuania cross at the sacred site.*



their native places. Many new crosses appeared on the Hill in memory of the unbearable torture and those who were dead, and also as a sign of gratitude for coming back. The Hill of Crosses with the heart-moving inscriptions became a kind of a manuscript of people's life. The Hill of Crosses remained openly antagonistic to Soviet ideology. All efforts to clear the inscriptions failed; instead of the removed words there appeared new ones.

In the spring of 1961 the Soviets decided to demolish the Hill of Crosses. It was completely bulldozed, the wooden crosses were burned, the iron crosses were used for scrap metal, the stone ones were buried in the ground. For many years the Hill was under watch, but it didn't help: a real war of crosses burst out. New crosses miraculously kept on appearing at night, their numbers increasing as time went on and in 1963, a memorial rock was placed on the hill to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the 1863 Rebellion. There were several other attempts to devastate the Hill. Bulldozer-like atheism prospered for ten years. There was even a project which attempted to flood the place, blocking roads and turning the Hill of Crosses into an inaccessible island. But all this was in vain, and in 1985 the Hill was left in peace, Finally in 1988, the Year of Rebirth, a real peace came to this sacred place.

The number of crosses is tremendous. One

cannot keep count of the thousands placed on the sacred ground, as every day their number is growing. Travelers who had visited the site before had a difficult time locating a special personal cross because of the constant addition of new ones. The Knights of Lithuania erected a special cross in 1993 with a carving of St. Casimir beneath it. We even found a momento by past presidential candidate Ross Perot and a star of David in honor of Lithuanian Jews who had died in WWII. The local authorities maintain a guard to keep watch over the site as recent thefts of personal artifacts that appeared valuable have recently occurred.

It is written that the Hill of Crosses reveals the soul of Lithuanian people. Here Christianity mingles with heathen relics, loneliness and reticence - with social and common aspirations. Primitivism, simplicity and even banality are interwoven with the flight of imagination, with a very sensitive intellect. Each visit reveals new features. People and the earth, the fate of the whole nation and nature join together into a powerful hymn, The Hill of Crosses is a monument to human existence, a memory of the past and a dream of the future.

(☛ continued on pg. 23)

All About the Juniors

by *Maria Deksnis*
3rd VP Juniors



Congratulations to Knight **Barbara Miller** for organizing a Junior Council ! C-72 Jrs. had their first meeting at St. Joseph's Lithuanian Catholic Church in Binghamton, NY. They have a lot of fun and interesting events planned for 1997.

C-141 Jrs. made Lithuanian straw ornaments for their December project. They joined the regular council for Kucios. Plans are underway for a reunion of the New England District Scholarship recipients in Bridgeport, CT.

At the C-112 Jrs. December meeting, Fr. Tony Markus spoke to the children about the true meaning of Christmas. They made individual Christmas wreaths and had pizza afterwards. They will be having a raffle booth at the regular C-112 fund-raiser in March. Half of the proceeds will go to the Jr. Fund, thanks to Ellie Kasputis who is a big supporter of the Juniors.

Congratulations to **Jennifer Hornik**, C-36 Hudson-Mohawk Junior for receiving the Mid-America Eleanor H. Laurin Scholarship Award! She is trying to re-organize the Juniors and enroll new members. Jennifer is also a Eucharistic Minister, a Lector and a teacher of CCD classes at Immaculate Conception Church.

C-96 Juniors are busy getting Junior activities ready for the 84th National Convention in Dayton, OH, this August.

C-50 Jrs., New Haven, were at the Christmas Arts and Crafts Boutique helping with the tables and running errands for the regular council.



C-100 Jrs. danced at the Christmas Festival of Trees at the Amsterdam Mall. They will also dance at the Festival of Nations in the Spring.

C-24 Juniors in Chicago attended the regular council Christmas party and joined in the singing of Christmas carols. They had a wonderful time.

Update on Dayton Juniors

by *Christine Fletcher & Julia Goecke*
C-96 Junior Advisors

The Dayton Junior council is looking forward to hosting the National Convention. We are planning several fun activities for Juniors attending this Convention.

In November, we had a get together and lunch at the Fletcher's house, our Junior advisors. Unfortunately, we did not get to go hiking at Charleston Falls due to pouring down rain. However, we planned a lot of future activities for the months to come.

A big thank-you goes to Council member, **Ann Scott**, for hosting the Juniors in December. With the help of Junior Advisor, **Christine Fletcher**, and Mid-Central 3rd Vice President, **Eleanor Mantz**, we made Christmas ornaments and decorations. Ann had a wonderful luncheon for the Juniors and provided all the craft supplies for us. This is the 2nd year that Ann Scott has hosted the Juniors for "craft day".

Many upcoming activities are being planned for the next couple of months. And currently, the Juniors are hard at work on the Mothers program and gifts for their mother!



Lithuanian Chefs

Grated Potato Dumplings

*Cepelinai / Trintų Bulvių
Virtiniai*



3 lbs potatoes
1 lb. cooked potatoes
1 lb. beef or pork
(can be mixed 2/3 beef and 1/3 pork)
1 onion
salt, pepper
1/2 tsp. powdered vitamin C

Grate potatoes and squeeze out all liquid. Add vitamin C (this keeps the potatoes from turning brown.) Peel cooked potatoes, mash and mix with raw potatoes. Add salt and knead to mix well. Grind the meat, add salt, pepper

and sauteed onion. Mix well. Take a piece of the potato mixture the size of an egg and flatten it out on the palm of the hand, placing a meat stuffing in the middle. Cover the meat with the edges of the potato mixture and seal. Cook in salted boiling water 25 to 30 minutes. Then remove dumplings from the water and place on a heated serving dish. Pour sauteed bacon and onion mixture over them and serve.

Cepelinai may also be stuffed with cottage cheese. Use 4 lbs. of potatoes, 1 lb. of cottage cheese and 2 eggs.

Potato mixture is prepared in the same way as for the meat-stuffed dumplings. Cream the cottage cheese, add eggs, salt, several tablespoons of sour cream and beat well. Stuff the dumplings as in above recipe and cook the same way. Serve with sour cream and butter.



Off to Summer Camp at Neringa

by Dana Grajauskaitė

Tucked away in the beautiful forests and mountains of Vermont is a haven for Lithuanian culture and Christian values. Twenty eight years ago, the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Putnam, CT founded this haven, Camp Neringa in Marlboro, Vermont, a summer camp for children of Lithuanian heritage. Since the opening of the first camp in the summer of 1970, each consecutive has brought with it a variety of camping sessions in Lithuanian as well as in English for both children and families.

Neringa's mission is to foster Christian values, Lithuanian culture and positive character development. Campers participate in activities ranging from Lithuanian dancing, singing and folk art to faith and value discussion groups and liturgy, all within the context of summer camp which of course means games, sports, swimming,

hiking and lots of fun!

The 1997 English speaking children's camp for youth between the ages of 7-16 will be held from June 29 to July 12. The children live in cabins grouped together by age, with at least one counselor. Camp counselors are at least 18 years old, and have been chosen for their experience in working with children, knowledge of Lithuanian culture and Neringa values. Program staff, the camp chaplain and the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception are an integral part of the staff.

Neringa's newest and fastest growing camp is the English speaking Lithuanian heritage family camp. The 4th annual camp this year will be from August 14-17. Young families with small children camp together, in a program which includes family activities as well as separate activities for children and parents. This session brings together everyone from aunts and uncles to grandparents to camp together with their families and children in a Lithuanian and Christian atmosphere.

We encourage you to become a part of this wonderful experience. For more information or to register, please contact the Neringa office at 600 Liberty Highway, Putnam, CT 06260, call **860-928-7008** or e-mail us at neringa@neca.com



Lithuanians in the News

On a Horse Everyone is Eye to Eye or No Reach, No Peach!

Jane Zukas, daughter of C-109 Great Neck, NY members Josephine and Joe Zukas and niece and Goddaughter of HM Mary and the late Anthony Kober, placed 6th in the recent Atlanta international Paralympics Equestrian competition. Jane has been riding horses since the age of 3, when Father, Joe put her on a horse.

Now this accomplished equestrian has participated in competitions all over the world. Zukas, a 35 year old, was selected to compete with the 12 member World Championships for Disabled Riders in England. The company for which Jane works as a computer programmer sponsored her trip to England. Zukas, who is 4 feet, 3 inches tall, was born with achondroplasia, a congenial disorder of bone formation.

Zukas home is filled with plaques, ribbons and trophies for more than 20 years of competition. She said many of the awards are even more special because they were won when she was competing against nondisabled riders. Jane has her own pony named *Misty My Love* and rides him at least five times each week.

Her parents of course are fully behind her endeavors. "Janie works very hard for what she wants not just for herself but for her team. She wants to shine for her team." said mom, Josephine. Joseph her father took lessons himself, when Janie started riding so he could show her a few pointers.

Josephine made about 100 handcrafted badges for her daughter to exchange as an American souvenirs while she was in England. When Zukas with a group of 50 Olympians and Paralympians were honored at Hotel Hilton in Washington she met President Clinton. She told the President she saw him in a film clip on a saddle and had assessed that he too "had potential." She should know.

-Dalia Bulvičius

A Profile of Courage

A while ago there appeared an article in "The Shelter Island Reporter" by Jason Shields entitled *An Intimate Relationship With Courage*. It is about Matt Senken, son of Irene and Ed Senken of C - 12 NY City. Matt is a software engineer at Northrop-Grumman and lives in Rockville Center, NY.

Matt fell from a roof in October 1984. "I made it to the basement", he jokes. The ensuing paralysis caused by a broken neck was and continues to be no laughing matter. Now he sits in his racing car - a three-wheeled affair. An athlete, he enjoys his daily 10 mile runs in his wheel chair. "Last year I was the only one in a chair, so I came in first," he said with that same humorous undertone devoid of any self pity or resentment. Matt has no need in harboring those emotions, he is successful in all his endeavors considering his biggest accomplishment to be the birth of his son, Andrew, reproducing through "the miracle of science" he says.

Matt excels in rugby. Wheelchair rugby has progressed to an international level and Matt played for the United States in Aylesburg, England, winning a gold medal. Matt's local team the Long Island Strykers placed 9th out of 45 teams during the National Rugby Tournament. The Strykers, conceived in 1990 by the Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association, has made the tournament four times. Matt, who also made the East Coast All-Star team, is considered a high level number 1. He is arguably one of the best players in the country and

perhaps the world. Now he is playing wheelchair tennis. "Trying to", he confesses.

His family, parents Ed and Irene, brothers Paul and Greg, and sisters Pat and Bridget, along with Uncle Pete, have been entirely supportive. Matt finished college in 1989 with a degree in computers, concentrating on math and marriage.

There were just two doors available to Matt when he lay in his bed at Stony Brook University Hospital more than 10 years ago. One door required nothing but a resignation from everything he had enjoyed in life, another asked for everything he had inside and promised, through hard work to reward him that which is good and sincere. It asked for him to fail until he succeeded, to keep trying despite each setback until he could say: "I did it". It asked for courage and Matt Senken did not disappoint. Ask his son Andrew. -*Dalia Bulvičius*.

Nurses in Lithuania

The Anna Marie College clinical nursing teaching exchange with Lithuania is a big draw for Central Massachusetts RN's enrolled in the college's bachelor of nursing science degree program. They experience unheated hotel rooms in midwinter, must pay their own expenses of approximately \$1,300 and take time off their regular jobs but receive credit for the 15-day program. Seven women attended this year's January program in Lithuania teaching seminars on topics ranging from patient education to stress management. The nurses, joined by a professor and three nursing students from Fairfield University. Jean Kuhn, the professor, said the University chose Lithuania because they received a letter from the Catholic Church urging student to find ways to assist the fledgling democracy.

Although the nurses notice some improvement on their second year of the program, they noted that Lithuania still lacks updated medical equipment, heart disease and cancer are the leading causes of death, with 28 being the average age for a heart attack.

*Worcester (MA) Telegram & Gazette 1/28/97
Submitted by HM Ann Bender, C-26, Worcester.*

MORE HOSPITAL SUPPLIES

Through the extreme dedication of C-100 members, Polly and Ed Žiausys, Amsterdam Memorial Hospital was given recognition for donating over one-half million dollars worth of hospital supplies and equipment to Lithuania.

After listening to Robert Boris, Pres. of Aid to Lithuania, Inc. at a K of L convention some five years ago, Polly and Ed Žiausys began their second career "sending help across the waters".

Ed Žiausys, who is employed by the hospital in its purchasing department, is also known as Eddie the Ambassador, helping Polly and others gather, store and transport for shipment, all types of hospital equipment even at their own expense.

"You cannot imagine how grateful the (Lithuanian) people are," said Polly. "They are so thankful for whatever we give them. I have received letters from many hospitals in Lithuania thanking us for our efforts. We do not realize what we have here. They have so little in Lithuania."

Nancy Patton, Public Relations Director of Amsterdam Memorial Hospital plans to continue the project. "We are here to meet the needs of the community and that community goes beyond Amsterdam...it reaches beyond the waters."

*Amsterdam Evening Recorder - Submitted by
Mirga Bablin, C-100*

HILL OF CROSSES (☞ from page 19)

In the Summer of 1996, there were no souvenir shops surrounding the Hill, as found in other tourist attraction sites. Instead, local Lithuanian vendors sell crosses, rosaries, books, flowers and amber products from cars and makeshift stalls.

The largest town with hotel accommodations is Šiauliai, located twelve kilometers (or approximately 7 1/2 miles) away is off the Šiauliai-Riga highway. It features a nice, walkable downtown shopping area, modern restaurants and cafes and an open park and concert area. Don't expect five-star accommodations until the future when we predict this area to become a pilgrimage site visited by many.

Sources include: Kryžių Kalnas by Vytenis Rimkus ©1994; Lithuania By Car A. Semaška © 1995, Vilnius.

*Legends from Juodkrantė - Ragany Kalnas
(Black Shore - Witches Hill)*

Peteris and the Crows



by Feliksas Marcinkas
translated by Dalia Bulvičius

It is told that many years ago, perhaps in the year of the dragon, in the month of November, when the inhabitants of Juodkrantė (Black shore) caught crows and barbecued them on a fire or boiled them in a kettle then ate them.

One of Juodkrantės fishermen by the name of Peteris had lots to worry about. Every day of the week he went to sea, and every time he caught less and less fish. Not one "entered" his net - not the eel or the salmon. After his fishing expedition, he brought home a few roaches which were just enough for the cat to have a taste, or else cook up a meager fish soup. Seeing his fate he decided to catch a few crows.

On one fine Saturday, gathering together his crow catching nets he went out to test his luck. After one hour then two there was not a crow in sight. Then as the sun was just "wadding" into the sea, a small bedraggled crow got tangled in the net. Even this was a blessing for the hungry fisherman. Rushing home with his catch he presented it to his wife. She sprinkled it with salt and boiled it, then divided it among her family. Each got a meager bite "pakabine dantis" (anticipating

more food) the family stared at Peteris waiting for him to say something.

"I will go on Sunday to try my luck again at catching crow." As he said so he did. Getting up early, he put his net under his arm and departed to search for the proper locations where crows could be found. Hardly had he set up the net, when a flock of crows descended. As soon as he had stuffed them into his sack and prepared the net again, the clock struck twelve o'clock. All of a sudden a little old man appeared by his side with a sack slung over his shoulder. He said to Peteris:

"How are you making out with the crow catching?"

"Not too badly."

"I think I will help you, since I can see the job is too much for you."

"That's OK with me," answered Peteris.

With an assist from the little old man, the crow catching was even more successful. When all of Peteris sacks were filled with crows, the wind started to howl, and it started to get dark very quickly. Peteris thanked the unknown little man for his help and started towards home. When he got home and opened the sacks, to his great amazement the sacks were empty - not even a feather.

Then Peteris understood that on Sunday, Lucifer sent a devil to help him catch the crows. From that day on, Peteris never went fishing or catching crows on a holyday.

*Illustrations from Witches Hill
by E. Jonušas and P.
Tamulionis* ❖❖❖





April Fools ... Night of Laughter

by Antonia M. Wackell



Oftentimes, before the radio descended upon us, we would gather around the old Standard (black, nickle-plate trimmed, coal burning stove) for one of Grandmother's favorite pastimes - "Atminkite mano misle" - an evening of guessing riddles (Grandma had plenty), tricks, stories that would entertain the enthusiastic, not too critical an audience. All narration was given in Lithuanian with an occasional prompting.

This time, the smallest of the group an 'almost four-years-old', Teresuke, after listening attentively to her elders, decided that she had something exciting to contribute that concerned her playmates and herself.

Struggling with her story and the Lithuanian language midway, she suddenly stopped. We waited. It was evident that the little speaker just could not continue with her story. Being a polite and patient audience, we waited, but it was most perplexing because she sought no advice.

Finally, some thought spurred her into action. She darted to her older brother. Drawing down his wiser nine-year-old head, she whispered, "How do you say 'fork' in Lithuanian?"

Now, big brother was a tease- "an awful tease"- and his favorite victim was this little sister now asking for help in her grave predicament. First though, brother gave a swift mischievous look around the silent, wide-awake audience. Then putting his arm around his sister, he whispered back, "I'm so sorry. I can't remember it, either. Perhaps the others could help you."

It was strange... very strange, that after consulting the others, no one could help solve her problem. They, too, had forgotten or did not even know the Lithuanian word for 'fork'. Dear, oh, dear. How am I going to finish my story, she worried.

Undaunted, she stood with her gaze upon Grandfather napping in his rocker. Every now and then, a snort was heard from Grandpa. Deep in

thought, she watched him and we watched her. Cautiously, she approached him and dared to pluck his sleeve once, then again... and the third yank aroused him.

Grandpa gave a great yawn. Stretched himself and opened his eyes to discover that his little Teresuke was standing beside him. "Kas yra mażyte?" he asked.

The listeners who were now suffering from severe cases of strain, wondered: Does Grandpa know what is going on ... what is he going to say (Neither the audience, nor the storyteller had seen that (Grandfather had slyly opened his eye just a fraction, nor did they know that he was fully aware of the crafty plot designed against his vulnerable Teresuke.)

Assured of her Grandfather's complete attention, she looked at him closely and asked, "Grandpa, kaip sakai šakutes Lietuviškai?" Instantly, laughter exploded. The immovable, little storyteller frowned fiercely. "I will not finish my story if you are all going to laugh now!" she threatened.

Silence immediately replaced laughter, and the story was finished. "NOW," she directed, "you can all laugh!" And laugh we did! Beaming with delight, the little raconteur was so happy to know that her story was received with favor and applause - even Grandpa was laughing out loud, she noted. Yet she hesitated. Because an 'almost four-year-old' can sometimes be unpredictable, we waited. We anticipated something- but what?

The speaker, once more, went to her Grandfather, placed her hand upon his shoulder, and with twinkling eyes, she said: AČIŪ LABAI! Grandpa, you are very smart!"

Grandfather accepted the startling and undeserved tribute with great dignity in his rocker, surrounded by repeated laughter and applause.

As for the listeners - their disloyalty was reprehensible: trying to undermine an 'almost-four-year-old' young storyteller's success. ...

Now Grandmother, maintained that this night was the happiest "juoku vakaras" (night of laughter) she attended. ❖❖❖



C-1, Brockton, MA *Susan K. Boroskas*

Brockton C-1, after a brief hiatus following the National Convention, started the season with elections of officers. The same slate of officers were returned with the exception of secretary. Diane Dubois was appointed to replace Sylvia Shukis who was commended for her work and devotion to the K. of L.

The Council participated in the parish family picnic and were busy dishing out our kugelis dinner and led the parishioners in a sing-a-long.

Our participation in a clothing drive for the Children's Relief Fund was very gratifying. This last shipment of clothes, medical supplies, food etc. makes it the 50th of 40 foot containers sent to Lithuania. Sister Helen spearheaded the project.

Congratulations to Doris Fralick, our treasurer, who welcomed her first grandchild, Jordan Nicole and to Grandmother Madam President, Ronnie, who had the double pleasure in welcoming twins Paul and Maria. God's blessings and love to all of them. Our sympathy goes out to Pat Achorn and family on the sudden death of her mother, Helen Miskinis. In a tragic fire, Andy and Connie Grein and family lost most of their possessions two days before Christmas. Mother, Susan

On the Calendar...

District Conventions:

May 16-18, 1997 Mid Central District
Hosts: C-102 - Tim Baibek (313)421-1092

Sept. 28, 1997 Mid Atlantic District
Hosts: C-110 - Bruno Rutkunas (516)628-2292

National Convention:

Aug. 7-9, 1997 Hosts C-96, Dayton, Ohio
James Geiger
Convention Chairman (937)836-7996
Robert Pant
C-96 President (937)228-8641

Boroskas provided shelter until they were able to move into an apartment temporarily until their house can be reconstructed. Our prayers go out to them.

As a result of a successful convention, we were able to help sponsor travel expenses for 9 year old Ligita Nasikaite from Lithuania for a second corrective jawbone operation. C-1 members, John and Ann Statkus provided comfort and housing throughout the stay of Ligita and her mother. John was instrumental in getting all this accomplished. Ligita arrived on her birthday and C-1 members helped her celebrate with cake and ice cream and presented her a Barbie doll and other gifts.

The parish bazaar had the culinary talents of K of L members cooking potato pancakes throughout the day. In December, we once again sponsored Kučios for about 150 guests. It was a solemn yet

joyous occasion coordinated by Sister Helen, Sister Euginia and assisted by Pat Akule of C-17.

Plans are being made to celebrate the 50th Jubilee in the priesthood of Father Peter Shakelis. Father was pastor for 25 years at St. Casimir's in Brockton and upon retirement has been assisting at various parishes in the South Shore. He has twice spent time in Lithuania actively taking part in the spiritual renewal of the church, seminary and village parishes. Father Peter has been involved with K of L since his younger days and at the present time is N.E.D. Spiritual Advisor.

Sunday, May 4, 1997 at St. Casimir's, Brockton, Mass will be celebrated at 4:00 PM with a collation following in the church hall. A shower of cards of congratulations would add to the joyous occasion: Rev Peter Shakelis, South Alden Road, Plymouth, MA 02360-2042

C-3, Philadelphia, PA *Daina Kapochus*



The picturesque scenery and crisp air of Autumn have been replaced by the wicked winter cold and bitter temperatures. Council 3 gathered for their monthly meeting on January 12. We were pleasantly surprised to see our newly met friends Stella and Elizabeth (Dolly) make a grand entrance to our gathering. I guess spending 2 weeks on tour in Lithuania with numerous C-3 members was not enough for them. If they could handle that they could handle anything (Just kidding). It was nice of them to join us and we welcome them, hoping they will become active members of our C-3 family.

Father Wassel, spiritual advisor of C-3, has retired from St. Casimir's Parish in Philadelphia. He will continue his position as spiritual advisor. We wish him a healthy and happy retirement.

Council 3 welcomes Fr. Joseph Ramdaka as a new member to our family. Many of us had the opportunity to get to know Fr. Joe during our council sponsored tour to Lithuania this summer. We look forward to having him be an active participant in C-3. Welcome Aboard, Fr. Joe.

Lithuanian Independence day was observed on the anniversary date of February 16. Each year, this is the perfect opportunity for all councils to write letters to area newspapers about Lithuania, its people and their trials and tribulations in the fight to win as well as retain its independence. If we as Americans of Lithuanian

descent do not educate the rest of the American public, who will? Several C-3 members will be sure to send articles to area newspapers.

C-3 observed St. Casimir's feastday on Sunday, March 2. A 10:30 am mass was followed by a Champagne brunch in the parish hall. It was an enjoyable Sunday afternoon for all who attended. Profits from the brunch help to support our donations to various charities. It has been a tradition of C-3, that members who are eligible for his/her first degree, be awarded it at the St. Casimir Day festivities. C-3 members who are eligible for first degree are: Fr. Peter Burkouskas, Antoinette Petrone, and Daina Kapochus.

C-3 members also learned that C-3's Lithuanian Affairs chairman, Leonard Kapochus, has been eligible for his 3rd degree but had to wait until the K of L time limit for 3rd degree passed in order to receive it. He will receive his degree at the observance of St. Casimir's Day hosted by the Amber District in Shamokin, PA.

Fr. Peter, Antoinette and Len (or daddy as I like to call him) have all been active members of the K of L. Congratulations to all of you and C-3 thanks you for everything you have contributed in making our council as well as the K of L a success.

As we button up our coats, got our hats and gloves and see our breath in the cold air, we look forward to what we hope will be an early Spring.

C-7, Waterbury, CT *Arlene Stiklius*

We are happy to report that Tony Polman is doing fine after a recent operation. We are glad to see that you are up and about. We wish you the best, Tony.

On March 3, 1997, we celebrated our St. Casimir's Mass at 7 P.M. at St. Joseph Church. Brunch followed after Mass at our K of L club room.

On March 10, 1997, Connecticut Lithuanian Catholics (CLC) met at St. Joseph's K of L club. Reverend Francis Karvelis and Reverend John Rikteraitis hosted this very rewarding meeting.

We are saddened by the passing of Tony Kober, Port Washington NY. Tony was formally with the staff of the VYTIS.

Our dear friend Rev. John Rikteraitis has challenged all able-bodied Waterbury Lithuanians to a 10 pin bowling match with New Britain, CT. He is even willing to give us a handicap. It should be a fun day.

C - 10, Athol - Gardner, MA *Vincukas*

On December 22nd our K. of L. observed a truly old fashioned Kučios at the Lukas barn, in Gardner, which is affectionately known as the "Pent House". 35 members and friends were in attendance. The lights were dimmed, candles lit and Rev. John Petrauskas, MIC, read the Christmas Gospel of Luke in English and President Bill Wišniauskas did the same in Lithuanian. Father John opened with a prayer of thanksgiving. He also prayed for the deceased

members. He broke and shared the plotkelės with all present and they in turn with one another. The menu consisted of twelve meatless Lithuanian specialties. This year the shrimp and lobster that were not on the menu, since our parents and grandparents never tasted them. Desert was dried fruit compote and poppy seed breads. The tables were spread with hay in memory of Christ's manger and covered with a white tablecloth. A crucifix and a plate of plotkeliai were placed on all tables.

Sophia Fiorentino, Betty Pennez and Dr. Henry Gailiunas did the narration on the food and customs of a Lithuanian Christmas eve. Old Lithuanian traditions were acted out under the direction of Bronė Wišniauskas. Following the meal, carols were sung starting with "Sveikas Jėzau Gimisis".

The barn was decorated in the holiday mode highlighted with a Lithuanian style Christmas tree.

Rev. Albin Yankauskas, former pastor of St. Francis, was also in attendance.

Both dailies carried lengthy articles on the event and the "Gardner News" also featured a photo of the clergy and co-chairmen.

Tina Shatas our "grand lady" recently celebrated her 93 birthday and 83 years as a member of our council.

We prayerfully remember William Hakkinen, James Sacmen and Sylvester Lukas on the anniversary of their departure to eternity. Rest in peace!

David Lukas is doing fine



C-10'ers display their outfit colors - Lithuanian red, green and yellow!

after a triple bypass. Ann Ambrose is also ailing. Kathryn Paliulis our new "Vytis" correspondent is recovering from major surgery and in her absence "Vincukas" is filling in for her.

The welcome mat is extended to Emilie Bouthillier, granddaughter of our late Paula Shatos. Also Bronė and Richard Qualters and Mary Piragis McCallon.

C-26, Worcester, MA
Stephen V. Walinsky, Sr.

The February Valentine Day meeting and Pot Luck supper started with a parade of cooks, each harboring a keen appetite of their own, bearing pots of, pans of, and casseroles of, supplemented with all sorts of imaginable goodies, dainties, and creamed desserts. These tasty full containers arranged as a buffet, were irresistible, especially on the eve of Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent. This was without question one of the best.

Walter Grimala would have enjoyed it, had he lived to this day. He died on January 11, 1997. We pray that his Heavenly Banquets compare.

Following the feast, the meeting. Substituting for vacationing Pres. Vivian Rogers, Vice Pres. Anne Leseman officiated with a commanding gavel and business ran ever so smoothly. Fr. John spoke of the lack of confessions at

Christmas time. He wasn't sure how to explain this. His job was made easier, but he also wondered why people were not sinning. (ha! ha!)

Victoria Augustine, our Lith. Affairs chairperson held everyones attention as she related interesting facts of present conditions in Lithuania. The meeting ended with the prayer and the singing of the Vyčiu Hymnas.

Lithuanian Independence Day was commemorated on the official established date of February 16. Starting the day with a Solemn High Mass celebrated by Bishop Daniel P. Reilly, assisted by Fr. John Petrauskas and Fr. Anthony Nockunas of St. Casimir Parish, the Mass was well attended. Council 26 came in grand style showing off their badges and banners.

Following the Mass, all in attendance were invited to descend to the church hall to partake of a simple brunch, which was provided for by Council 26.

That afternoon the affair continued at Maironis Park. The keynote speaker was the

Lithuanian Consul from New York, Arnoldas Milukas. A chorale musical program of patriotic and familiar traditional Lithuanian songs was presented by the St. Casimir Choir, under the direction of, and accompanied by, Anne Walinsky, Parish organist. The program conclusion came about on a happy note, when Treasurer of the TARYBA, Algis Glodis announced the results of the collected contributions in the amount of \$2,225.00, and then we sang *Marija Marija*, expressing our gratitude.

The monies derived from the solicitation will be apportioned and distributed, as requested by the donors, to Aid to Lithuania and other supporting agencies.

Congratulations and thanks must be extended to everyone involved in the planning and presentation of such an enjoyable and memorable affair.

C-63, Lehigh Valley, PA ***Evelyn Klinauskas Harryn***

Council-63 also held their election of officers. In November their induction took place, with Delores Connolly presiding. Officers for the 1996-97 term are:

President - Joseph Ogint
V.- President- Ben Apanavičius
Treasurer - Walter Balchunas
Rec. Secretary - Evelyn Harryn
Financial Secretary- Jane Lutick
Rituals - Jane Lutick
Sgts. at Arms - Andrew Keraga - Paul Harryn
Sunshine Lady - Ann Wonsock
Spiritual Advisor - Rev. John Grabish

Our November Meeting was our Annual Covered Dish Buffet.

There was a delicious variety of foods presented and our tantalizing choice of desserts. Spiritual Advisor, Father Grabish led with the opening prayer. After acknowledging birthdays and anniversaries, Vice President, Ben Apanavičius led with the singing of "Lietuva Tevyne" and the Pledge to the Flag.

President Delores Connolly proceeded with opening the meeting. She then handed the gavel over to Vice- President, Ben Apanavičius. Delores announced the completion of her term and thanked everyone for their help.

The Ethnic Tree Exhibition in Bethlehem was a huge success once again. Over two-thousand tourists visited these trees. The exhibition was held from Dec. 1st to January 12th. The Lithuanian Tree had news coverage from the local newspapers and TV Station. It was outstanding.

On December 8th, Council-63 held their Annual Portrayal of Kučios. It began with a Mass with the Procession of Lights and singing of Christmas Hymns by our Lithuanian Choir members. The invocation was given by our Spiritual Advisor, Father Grabish. The "Breaking of the Bread" with the Plotkelies, began with Robert Klova and his twin brother Adolf Klova. We then joined in a toast of sweet wine with our Annual Toastmaster, Albert Klizas, delivering the toast. By now, the aroma of foods were permeating the air, and the taste buds were activating. And so we began to partake in the array of traditional

Kučios foods: Birsti Soup, Dry Mushroom/Barley Soup, Kugeli, Pickled Herring, Horseradish (freshly prepared by Al Klizas each year) it was all there. Adolf Klova, in his intriguing manner, gave the readings of the Lithuanian Traditions and Superstitions and the significance of each food we eat at this meal. Younger people attending were so inspired by this part of the program. We then had a Lithuanian and English sing-a-long. It was directed by Choir Director, Ben Apanavičius and the Lithuanian choir members. Then came the drawing of presents with at least ten lovely gifts won by lucky free ticket holders. A few of these gifts were donated by Lillian Klinosky. Many of the attendees wished the affair would not end. A great time was had by all. It was co-chaired by Valeria Smickle and Evelyn Harryn with Adele and Andy Keraga, and Jane Lutick on the committee. All the tableware and utensils were donated by our members, Ann and John Rushanan. We are very grateful.

Our Flag-Raising in Easton, Pa. was cancelled on February 14th due to inclement weather. On February 16th, we celebrated our Lithuanian Independence Day with a Mass at 10:30 A.M. and a Social Hour where a Lithuanian style luncheon was served. Hostesses for the event were Lillian Klinosky and Jeanette Klizas. Our guest speaker was Joseph Russel of C-29, Newark, NJ. Our regular monthly meeting followed the luncheon.

In response to the Medical Mission News, we at Council-63

extend our best wishes and prayers to Sister Michelle Garas and Sister Dolorita Butkus. We wish them success with their Hospice Project in Utena. May God bless them in their work.

We thank our member Adele Keraga for the great work she is doing with the Stamp-Collecting Project for Sister Helen. She has people from the Shillington-Reading areas sending her bunches of stamps. She is constantly reminding our council members that the program is still very much in action yet. So Save Your Stamps and get them to Adele.

Pray for our member Nellie Shirok. She recently had a stroke. Nellie is always there to help in any way she can and her generosity is always overwhelming. We miss her sweet warm smile.

Also, our member Pat Juknevic is in a nursing home, a victim of Alzheimer's. She and her husband Stanley Juknevic renewed their wedding vows on Valentine's Day. May God Bless you and keep you in his constant care.

C - 72, Binghamton, NY

John R. Mankus

Elections were held at our November meeting. Officers for 1997 are: Father John Mikalajunas - Spiritual Advisor and Spiritual Programs; John R. Mankus - President, Vytis Correspondent, Lithuanian Culture and Lithuanian Language; Ralph Sadauskas - Vice President; Irene Grikenis - Ritual Chairperson; Arthur Stankevitz - Secretary; Barbara Miller - Treasurer; Robert Skiba

- Financial Secretary and Trustee; Charles Almanas - Lithuanian Affairs and Sergeant at Arms; Ralph Sadauskas and Felix Svereika - Sergeant at Arms; Helen Svereika - Trustee and Public Relations; Ed Radin - Trustee.

Since our council began humanitarian aid shipments to convents and hospitals in Lithuania, our council has shipped eighty four large packages of medical and humanitarian supplies directly to convents in Vilnius and Kaunas. We also shipped prescription drugs to hospitals and doctors in Vilnius, Kaunas and Vabalninkas. Twelve packages were shipped during Christmas. Many thank you letters were received, these were translated by John Mankus and shared with our members. Father John Mikalajunas also shared these letters with Saint Joseph's Church parishioners, who continue to contribute generously to this drive. It should also be noted that during the last quarter of 1996 through the donations of parishioners of Saint Joseph's under the leadership of Father John Mikalajunas, Kathy Chadwick and Barbara Beardslee, two non Lithuanian parishioners, 163 boxes of clothing and food were shipped to needy families and orphanages in Lithuania. (Over two tons of supplies were shipped.)

Council members Irene and Casey Grikenis, Mary Ann and Harry Pakel, John and Grace Mankus, Ralph and Mary Ann Sadauskas and John Kruse have been very active in donating and packing boxes for shipping.

Thanks also to Elizabeth Kunce for her handiwork in knitting scarfs and slippers for the needy families and orphanages. Irene and Casey Grikenis and Barbara Miller helped Elizabeth Kunce celebrate her eighty-ninth birthday.

Our council, under the direction of Irene and Casey Grikenis participated in the Robertson Center International Christmas Tree Forest program during the Christmas season. Traditional Lithuanian straw ornaments were used to decorate the Christmas tree and various displays of traditional Lithuanian Christmas and cultural items were exhibited, including a replica of a wayside cross, a cultural display, Irene's beautiful Lithuanian painting and our Lithuanian flag.

Charles Almanas, our Lithuanian Affairs representative has been doing an outstanding job at each council meeting reporting on current news, latest activities and the situation in Lithuania.

We wish to welcome our newest member Dr. Joseph Kazlauskas to our council.

Lithuanian Independence Day, February 16th, was commemorated with Binghamton Mayor Richard Bucci.

C-74, Scranton, PA

Marie Laske

The Ethnic Rosary at St. Peter's Cathedral went well. Rev. Alphonse from St. Ann's Basilica said the homily "Rosary for Peace". He complimented the Lithuanians on their national costumes. Nellie Bayoras Romanas led the rosary.

Sister Lourdine Ramoska, sister of John Ramoska, a C-74 member, celebrated her 50th Golden Jubilee in her religious order. Richard Laske was toastmaster at the festivities.

We had a Lithuanian tree at Steamtown National Historic Site for Christmas.

Get well wishes to Peg Romanuskas who had a serious eye operation, and is now coming along fine. As we write she is visiting her daughter in California.

We attended the Pro-Life Breakfast at Genetti Manor with hundreds of others. The principal speaker was Janet L. Folger, Legislative Director, Ohio Right to Life, who explained partial birth abortion. Pennsylvania will be the fourth state to ban the procedure if the measure is enacted. Bishop Timlin said that books dealing with this subject should not be allowed in any university. He said, "prayer overcomes the impossible."

Our condolences go out to Mary Bulger's family. Mary, who was ill for a long time died on February 4th. She was a beautiful person and an asset to the Lithuanian community.

Richard Laske, chairperson, and John Ramoska raised the Lithuanian Flag. Our group picture was in Sunday's paper. Special thanks to all who took time out of their busy schedule to attend.

We presented Ann Patelunas with a cake at our February meeting. Ann is 88 years young. Ann Mateluvich is also 88 years young. Her brother Casimir Yanish, the youngster, celebrated his 80 birthday, on March 4th, you guessed it - St.



C-96 K of L'ers, Aldona Ryan and Elinor Sluzas welcome guest Ingrid Bublys (center) Honorary Lithuanian Consul from Cleveland.

Casimir's Day - Įlgiausių Metų.

If you don't remember your ethnic heritage, you will not know who you are.

Pray for all our sick and deceased K. of L. members.

Our K. of L'ers should keep July 26th open in your calendars, when Fr. Kasinskas and other Lithuanian priests will celebrate a Lithuanian Mass in the lower part of St. Ann's Basilica, which has recently been renovated.

C -96, Dayton, Ohio ***Fran Petkus***

On February 23, 1997 the Lithuanian community of the Dayton area celebrated the Anniversary of Lithuania's Independence Day. Mass was held at 10:30 AM at Holy Cross Church. Under the capable hands of our wonderful choir, voices were raised on high when singing the national anthems of the United States and Lithuania. The choir also sang the Lithuanian anthem in English at the close of Mass!!

Following Mass, participants

had a very special "Koffee Klatch" in the church hall that was co-chaired by Kitty Lemarr and Elinor Sluzas. HM Aldona Ryan chaired the program while HM Elinor Sluzas was MC. Our Vejeliai Dancers, with commentary by the director, Molly Geiger, performed much to the delight of all in attendance.

We had the honor as special guest speaker, Ingrid Bublys, who is Honorary Consul of the Republic of Lithuania from Cleveland, Ohio. Ingrid has her own consulting and business firm "IB Communications". She is a member of the American Baltic Committee and vice-president of the Lithuanian American Community, Inc. Mrs. Bublys' husband, as a member of the Cleveland Octet and her children, who danced with the Grandinlėlė Dancers of Cleveland, have all been to Dayton but this was her first trip. When arriving in Dayton, seeing the American and Lithuanian flags, Ingrid knew she was at the right church! Ingrid's talk covered conditions in Lithuania now with much hope for the future as Lithuania matures with her, regained freedom. Increase of imports from Lithuania to the United States is one of Ingrid's goals. She certainly made time for everyone needing individual input.

We also had the pleasure of meeting Ingrid's father, Henrikas Stasas. Mr. Stasas autographed his book "Kelioniu Vynas". The book covered his many travels throughout Europe, Asia, North, South and Central America. Congratulations to Ray and Millie Steinbrunner on

the occasion of their 50th Wedding Anniversary!. Get well wishes go to Dorothy Miller Conrady, Janet Veigel-Birt, Michael J. Petkus, Sr. and Jimmie Kavalaszkas. Mark those calendars for August 6 - 10, 1997!!! Plan your vacation around those dates ... we are looking forward to spending time with you at the 84th National Convention of the Knights of Lithuania!

C-102 Detroit, MI ***Dvynukės***

Blessings on the 17 members who braved the frigid and wintery weather conditions to attend the January Mass and meeting at St. Anthony's Church. Vice president, Richard Straksys did a fine job conducting the meeting in the absence of president, Larry Hofner, who recently underwent his second knee replacement and is recuperating nicely with a lot of LTC from Merri. Just heard through the grapevine that Jo Jonulate had hip replacement surgery several months ago and glad to hear that she, too, is doing well.

We extend our heartfelt sympathies to Fr. Babonas, our spiritual advisor, whose Mother recently passed away. Also to Helen Smolek and Theresa Medonis, whose brother, Edward Žaliagiris, a former 102 member, died recently at his Lakeland, FL home. May the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace.

Names added to our recent sick list are: Al Čerekas and his wife, Niola, as well as Česlovas Šadeika, to whom we wish a



speedy and complete recovery. Al has been a regular World Medical volunteer and is missed. World Medical is desperately in need of volunteer help.

Bob Boris had taken on the chairing of St. Casimir's Day Mass and luncheon at St. Anthony's. Any proceeds derived were donated to Aid to Lithuania, Inc.

Plans are underway for the MCD Bowling tournament and meeting the weekend of May 23, 24, 25. Chairman, Tom Baibak, invites all interested K. of L. bowlers to join in the festivities.

All is going well for Dr. Michael Acromite and his lovely wife, who are at present residing in Okinawa, for a 2 year stint. We wish them both a rewarding and enjoyable stay.

Looking forward to the National Convention in Dayton. Su Diev!

C-110, Maspeth, NY ***Helen Yakaitis***

Our February meeting went on as scheduled. Because of the mild winter weather, we have been able to attend our meetings and affairs.

Father Ted Rooney acted as our spiritual moderator in the absence of Msgr. Frank Bulovas, who is still unable to attend our meetings. We miss you Msgr. Frank - hurry and get well. Father Rooney is pastor of Transfiguration parish and is gracious to allow us to use the hall. Father Ted is also our alternate spiritual advisor.

Sunday, February 16th was the commemoration of Lithuania's Independence Day. A special Mass was offered at Transfiguration church with Father Stanley Raila as celebrant.

A bus load of our council members and some of our neighboring councils took the ride to Schenectady, NY, on March 9th for the MAD convention.

On March 23rd, our council celebrated St. Casimir's feast day. Ladies were dressed in Lithuanian national costumes, special prayers, a hot luncheon and a meeting followed the Mass.

On April 27th we again will be having our semi-annual dinner and dance. Julie Matulewich is to be chairperson since she did such a superb job at our Halloween Dinner and Dance.

We expect to have a special Mass on June 15th to commemorate the deportation of Lithuanians to Siberia in 1940.

On September 28th our council will host the MAD convention. We have invited Bishop Paulius A. Baltakis, OFM to be our principal speaker. More information to follow when it's available.

Sincere sympathy is sent to the family of Helen Ambrasia, who recently passed away. Rest in peace.

Anna Balsis a long time member has move to Arizona. We wish her much happiness.

It is interesting to note that our K. of L members play an important role in the outside world. Ann Marie Verbil, Director of Nurses for the

Queens Boulevard Extended Care Facility, a member of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Cardinal Spellman K of C, and C-110 member, has kept her fingers busy by making lap robes for the elderly, along with blankets, sweaters, hats and booties for newborns in need. Jean Mactutis, Financial Secretary and member of the K of C Ladies Auxiliary, along with Helen Matulonis, Secretary of C-110, are also deeply involved in making lap robes and baby quilts for various hospitals, particularly those afflicted patients and babies with AIDS.

C-144, Anthracite, PA

Ona

January of 1977 was the official date of our becoming members of the Knights of Lithuania. We actually organized in 1974 as a Lithuanian Organization of men and women whose purpose was to perpetuate our Lithuanian customs. Through Joseph Yenulaitis, H.M. (now deceased), of C-3, Philadelphia, we became interested in the K of L and in 1977 our small group of 37 joined the Knights of Lithuania. We have now grown to over 200 members and on March 2 we opened our 20th Anniversary with a beautiful St. Casimir's Day Mass and luncheon with Bernice Mikatavage, our first President as chairperson. The Friends of Šiluva Choir sang the beautiful Lithuanian hymns; Spiritual Advisor Father Ronald Jankaitis celebrated the Mass and his homily was an inspiration to all present. President Anne Wargo

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was Lector. The Offeratory gifts were presented by Gloria Dauchess, Margaret Valinsky, David Carroll and Evelyn and Victor Prep. Bernice Mikatavage presented a history of our 20 years at the luncheon. In 20 years we have contributed over \$100,00.00 to Lithuanian causes. Our yearly Lithuanian Day profits were always contributed to a Lithuanian cause, a record to be proud of. Our members are hard working and dedicated to all our projects. A thank you was given to all members as it was through everyone's efforts that the Council was able to accomplish all we did.

We received joyous news from our adopted parish of St. Ann's in Pavandenys, Lithuania. Several years ago through LCRA we sent a sum of money for the use of the Parish. A letter was received from the Pastor, Kunigas Jonas Petrauskis, along with photos of the church. Our donation was largely responsible for the refurbishing of the church which was in great need of it. The whole parish is grateful and

it was heart-warming for us all.

We were saddened at the loss of two members, Dr. Joseph Marconis and Charles Milbut. Amžina atsili to them with sympathy to their families.

Our condolences also go to former Vytis Editor, Mary Kober on the loss of her husband, Tony.

Twenty six members attended the Amber District St. Casimir's Meeting. Our thanks to the new Shamolin Council who were excellent hosts.

Our council will continue to adopt a Lithuanian orphan. Our Minersville members also collected new children's clothing, shoes and boots which were sent to Sister Helen in Brockton. We also still collect stamps for this project. A donation was sent to A.P.P.L.E. for 4 teachers to attend the summer seminars, and our yearly donation was forwarded to the Scholarship fund.

We wish a joyous spring to all our Vyčiai brothers and sisters.



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Maldos Galia

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 kažkas suklupo maldai.

Kas nors tą valandą
 Paprašė Dievą
 Palengvint mano našta.
 O jis - be galo gailėstingas -
 Nužengė ir paėmė ją iš manęs.

Nežinome, kaip dažnai, mums besimeldžiant
 Už paklydusį, sužeistą,
 Nelaimingą,
 Išklausoma.
 Nejučiom jų širdyse
 Atsiranda ramybė ir tylą.

Kas nors pasimeldė.
 Tikėjimo ranka palietė Dievą
 Ir atkvietė Jį žemėn tą dieną.

Daugybei širdžių reikia maldos,
 Tiek daug maldos:
 Tad, MELSKIMĖS !

*-Author unknown
 Submitted by Pauline Siauris
 C-17, S. Boston*